



## NJDOE News

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### **Commissioner Librera Revokes Charter of Paterson Charter School for Urban Leadership**

Commissioner of Education William L. Librera today revoked the charter of the Paterson Charter School for Urban Leadership. The school, with an enrollment of 350 students, had been on probation since February for deficiencies related to its fiscal operations, governance and compliance with education laws and regulations.

"After careful review and consideration, I have determined that the Paterson Charter School for Urban Leadership has not successfully implemented its remedial plan to correct the conditions which caused the probationary status of the charter school," Commissioner Librera wrote in a letter to Malissa Williams, president of the school's Board of Trustees.

In the letter, dated today, Dr. Librera recapped the past 18 months of state oversight that consisted of five school site visits, and a probationary period that the Department of Education extended from three to five months.

"We have worked with the Paterson Charter School for Urban Leadership over this period of time, outlining the steps the school needed to take to comply with state statutes and regulations," Librera said. "We feel that we have given the school ample opportunity to correct its deficiencies. Now, our focus is on making sure that the school promptly notifies students and parents that it will not reopen in September so that the families can make arrangements for their children's education to continue uninterrupted."

Staff from the Department of Education's Office of School Funding first visited the school on January 31, 2002 to examine issues related to its fiscal operations and charter. This visit began a series of meetings and visits between school staff and staff from the department's Office of Innovative Programs and Schools, the Passaic County Office of Education and the Office of School Funding to discuss the school's plan for addressing deficiencies.

In addition, the department's Office of Compliance completed an examination regarding the school's compliance with required criminal history reviews in December 2002. The examination determined that 41 of the school's 54 employees were not compliant with the law that requires the reviews. As of May 2003, 10 of the 41 employees were still noncompliant.

In addition to ensuring a smooth transition of students, the Commissioner advised the school of its responsibilities to follow laws and regulations regarding the school's dissolution.

The Paterson Charter School for Urban Leadership opened in September 2000. It was approved to initially serve a maximum number of 396 Paterson students in grades K-4. The school's charter would have permitted an expansion of enrollment to 500 students in grades K-5 in 2003-04. The school ended the 2002-03 school year with 288 students enrolled.

The mission of the Paterson Charter School for Urban Leadership was to nurture, develop and educate achievement-oriented students to become the city's future leaders and core professionals.

Today's revocation marked the seventh time that a charter has been revoked since the first charter schools opened in September 1997. The last charter school that received a revocation notice was the CALLA Charter School in Plainfield, in June 2002.

New Jersey currently has 50 charter schools that enroll approximately 13,000 students.

[A copy of the Commissioner's revocation letter is attached.](#)